



Report

In 2011 Yosefa Dar, the director of The Fund for Innovative Teaching, met with Ami Bouganim and was encouraged and inspired to develop a new track in our Fund. For over 40 years our Fund has been supporting teacher's innovations. We help turn teacher's dreams into a reality, and allow teacher's creativity to develop. These projects not only enhance the pupils learning experience, but also make the teaching experience more rewarding. Over the years some of the initiatives we supported and guided developed into broader projects at schools, involving more than one teacher. These broader initiatives became more significant and stable at the school since they involved more teachers. Ami highlighted the significance of encouraging the Principals involvement in the development of teacher's innovations. As a result of Ami's perspective, and with guidance and support from Dr. Tali Yariv Mashal the director of the Beracha Foundation, our Fund opened a track called "Tzavta" (translation: Joint / Togetherness). Tzavta created an additional partnership within the ministry of Education, as the Self-Management Division became involved. This track is intended for elementary schools all over Israel, the Arab and Jewish, and is based on the concept of a team of teachers as including the principle, working together to develop an initiative that affects a large group of pupils in the school and influences the school's atmosphere along with the pedagogical learning.

Matanel's partnership with us has been instrumental on a number of levels: Firstly, the financial backing allowed us to focus more on development of our pedagogical guidance's which include personal mentoring and conferences for the Tzavta team. We designed a model that assists the teachers in organizing the stages and milestones for integrating the initiatives into the school. Throughout the development and implementation of this model, we conduct evaluations and analyzed them with the guidance of Dr. Yael Steinberg from The Institute for Democratic Education (IDE).

Secondly, with the recognition and support from Matanel, we were able to open doors to other foundations that we have since partnered with us for support on other projects.

Lastly, the structure that Matanel proposed to support our project over three years was extremely helpful for our Fund's ability to develop a new track. The Tzavta track grew every year, and knowing we had the three years of a support allowed our Fund to grow not only in numbers but also in depth.

The Tzavta track has been a huge success and we would like to share with you some insights we have gained from our experience. We have found that having the Principals involved in initiatives adds many benefits. The Principals involvement in the initiative, allows to have it reflect the schools vision while clarifying it and execute it. With the Principal on the team, the allocation of resources to the initiatives became streamlined. These resources included added hours in the schedule for students and teachers and money to purchase equipment. The Principal could also accelerate decision making and approval to make changes. The Principals involvement can advance structural changes

as well as pedagogical changes that influence teaching methods. For instance, the principle could easily integrate subjects and age groups, creating a multidisciplinary learning structures as well as multiage learning.

In order to develop a positive team work environment, we highly encourage all Tzavta initiatives to have a "leading team" composed of diverse members of the school staff. These typically include the Principal, administrative staff, teachers, pedagogical staff and other school employees such as social workers or maintenance personal, depending on the needs of the initiative. These leading teams meet regularly and become the core leadership of the initiative. Having Principals part of the leading team creates an opportunity for the principle to empower staff members and expand the circles of the staff members' involved in the initiative in a positive manner that effect the school atmosphere. This creates a multiplication of force within the schools manpower and allows for growth within the existing human resources.

One of the important concepts that emerged from our evaluation process with IDE was the significance of developing an "Entrepreneurial Spirit" in the school. This Spirit is felt (and measured) by the motivation of other members besides the initial entrepreneur to initiate. When analyzing the data from the questioners we learned that the school staff members found that the initiative in the school created an "Entrepreneurial Spirit" school among teachers and pupils. Being involved or surrounded by an atmosphere that encourages change and allowed activities, permeates the spirit thought out the organization. Initiatives in general but particularly initializes that the principal is involved in, lead to more initiatives from teachers both involved in the first one as well as from teachers who were bystanders. The entrepreneurial spirit can be noticed in big school wide initiatives that teachers want to start but more often the spirit can be seen in small action that can make a big difference. For example, when teachers are involved in a new teaching method they find themselves being more creative in their evaluation of the pupils as well. So by encouraging teachers to teach throw games often teachers will "test" the pupil with a game too. These evaluation alternatives seek to other subjects as well, once the teacher experience creative evaluation methods they carry it out in other subjects and other classes too.

Another important concert in Tzavta is to have many circles of involvement. The leading team constantly needs to seek partnerships with in the school and in the community surrounding the school. These circles are part of what makes Tzavta successful and dynamic. The verity of people involved constantly allows more people to join and has an ongoing effect in and around the school. These circles, not only create a direct influence on the atmosphere of partnership and involvement but also influence the feeling of capability among the people who are involved. When these circles become based on students who are involved in design and development, it reinforces the pupils feeling of belonging and is a source of motivation to study. This aspect of student involvement raised new ideas in our Fund that we hope to further develop in the future.

Over the past three years our Fund in partnership the Matanel Foundation encouraged and developed more than thirty Tzavta programs. We look forward to continuing to expand our tracks and to allow and encourage teachers and school to develop new way to teach and engage pupils.